



ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND CAR CLUBS
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Northern Ireland's Motorsport Competitors Celebrate Outstanding Achievement and Success!

Northern Ireland may be a relatively small country, but it is filled with motorsport talent, and that was very evident at Saturday's annual Association of Northern Ireland Car Clubs' (ANICC) awards evening!

With an impressive array of more than 200 perpetual cups and crystal trophies, the finest competitors in the country were present at the Armagh City Hotel to receive their accolades and awards for the 2016 season.

All motorsport disciplines were represented from junior rallying and autotesting to racing, hill climbing and stage rallying, the star-studded evening was a night to remember. It was fantastic to acknowledge all the UK award winners from Northern Ireland in the JLT/MSA Club and Volunteer of the Year awards with Jimmy McKeefry from Magherafelt lifting the overall UK Volunteer of the Year Award. Jimmy and three category winners in these awards will each attend the prestigious MSA Night of Champions at the RAC Club, Pall Mall, London on Saturday 28th January 2017.

On hand to present many of the awards was Jonathan Day, MSA Director of Development and Training.

Together with presentations honouring all the ANICC Championship winners there were also other surprises in store as well. The ANICC presented a very well deserved ANICC Lifetime Achievement Award to **Bill Johnston** from Belfast recognizing his outstanding contribution to Motorsport in Northern Ireland for over 50 years. Also the 2016 Clubman of the Year Award went to **Noel Cochrane** from Newtownards marking his contribution as both a Club official and a competitor in many grassroots disciplines since the early 80's. The organizing team from the **John Mulholland Motors Ulster Rally** also received a surprise award from the Motor Sports Association recognizing their achievement in being named 'Best round of the 2016 British Rally Championship'.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2016 Northern Ireland Motorsport Award and this was presented to **Ronnie Trouton MBE** for his services to Northern Ireland motorsport since the early 60's marking his significant achievements which culminated in his appointment as a member of the Motor Sports Association Board during the 90's and he is currently an Honorary Vice-President of the British Motor Sports Council. Ronnie said: "This is a fantastic honour for me to receive this award for my work with the Association over many years and I sincerely appreciate that the Clubs and members have thought of me for this award."

Speaking on behalf of the ANICC, Chairman Henry Campbell, said: "This has been a tremendous evening for Northern Ireland Motorsport. This small country has the ability to produce some exceptional driving talent and in 2016, many achieved their personal goals and have been recognised on the International stage. Henry continued by expressing his personal support for all the fantastic volunteers who work in the sport from Northern Ireland and particularly this year with three Clubs and seven Volunteers from ANICC receiving acknowledgements for winning overall UK awards through the MSA. "

"Finally, Henry also congratulated Ronnie Trouton on receiving the ANICC Motorsport Award and said: "It is important to offer support and congratulations to all of our award winners. I wish everyone a safe and successful year's motorsport during 2017."

With the triumphs of 2016 behind them, competitors are gearing up towards another successful season. Many championships are already underway, and there are sure to be some tight battles in all disciplines. More details about all forms of four-wheeled motorsport in Northern Ireland can be found online at www.anicc.org.uk.

Main award winners and nominees for the 2016 Northern Ireland Motorsport Award are named below.

Photograph shows Ronnie Trouton MBE receiving his ANICC Motorsport Award from (left) Henry Campbell, ANICC Chairman, Jonathan Day, MSA Director of Development and Nicky Moffitt, ANICC Secretary (Photo credit to John O'Neill, Sperrins Photography).

ENDS

(Nicky Moffitt, ANICC Honorary Secretary – nmoffitt@btopenworld.com)

MAIN AWARD WINNERS:

ANICC 2016 MOTORSPORT AWARD

Recipient

Ronnie Trouton MBE

(All nominees for this award are detailed below for information)

ANICC / MSA 2016 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Recipient

Bill Johnston

ANICC 2016 CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Recipient

Noel Cochrane

SAM BOWDEN GARAGE SERVICES AUTOTEST CHAMPIONSHIP

2016 NI Autotest CHAMPION

Paul Mooney

McGRADY INSURANCE / MSA NI STAGE RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

2016 Northern Ireland Stage Rally Champions **Derek McGarrity and Crawford Henderson**

S.W ADAIR TYRES SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIP

2016 Sprint Champion

Gerard O'Connell

MILLERS OILS HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP

2016 Hill Climb Champion

Chris Houston

NORTHERN IRELAND FORMULA FORD CHAMPIONSHIP

2016 NI FF1600 Champion

Alan Davidson

McGRADY INSURANCE JUNIOR 1000 RALLY CHALLENGE IRELAND

2016 Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Champion

Josh McErlean and Tommy McErlean

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JLT/MSA Volunteer of the Year – Overall UK winner

Jimmy McKeefry

JLT/MSA Volunteer of the Year – Marshal Category winner

Keith Gault

JLT/MSA Volunteer of the Year – Steward/Clerk Category winner

Wilson Carson

JLT/MSA Volunteer of the Year – Technical Category winner **Patricia Laverty**
JLT/MSA Club of the Year – 2nd Overall UK Club **Larne Motor Club**
JLT/MSA Club of the Year – 3rd Overall UK Club **Ulster Automobile Club**
2016 British Rally Championship – Best event – **John Mulholland Motors Ulster Rally**

NOMINEES FOR THE 2016 MOTORSPORT AWARD (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

CALUM DEVINE

22 year old Calum Devine was in tremendous form during 2016 driving his Opel Adam in the Clonakilty Irish Tarmac Championship. Calum started competition at 16 years of age within the F1000 Junior Rally Championship and learnt much during his time in this competitive formula prior to purchasing a Citroen C2R2 for 2013. He concluded 2013 with a Junior Win on the Cork 20 Int Rally.

A move to a Fiesta R2 car in 2014 saw further personal development competing on 9 successful events throughout Ireland prior to purchasing a new Opel Adam car for 2015/2016. This award nomination follows up his 2016 success as winner of the FIA Celtic 2WD Trophy, Winner of Class 2 in the Irish Tarmac Championship and also Irish 2WD Champion. His results also earned him 9th Overall in the main Clonakilty Irish Tarmac Championship.

DANIEL HARPER

At 15 years of age Daniel has a wealth of motorsport experience with numerous event and championship wins during each year since starting competition on Quad bikes during 2006. Daniel also competed very successfully on Karts since 2012, entered F1000 Junior Stage Rallying during 2015 and now competing in Car Racing during 2016. 2016 was a very successful year for Daniel driving in the Ginetta Junior Championship supporting the BTCC and finishing the year as Rookie Champion however also winning outright at Oulton Park during the season. Recently Daniel was 3rd Overall in the Ginetta Junior Winter Series.

JIMMY McKEEFRY

Jimmy has been a longstanding and dedicated member of Magherafelt and District Motor Club. Jimmy, who has always had a love of cars and motorsport, decided to enter his first rally as a co-driver during 1992 and he was smitten. Having joined his Club he then accepted all manner of official roles at events up to being Clerk of the Course for their Championship Tour of the Sperrins stage rally event. At every event in his area, Jimmy assists with set-up (regardless of status or discipline) and also provides support and briefings to everyone when required. Jimmy is an experienced and knowledgeable motorsport volunteer and in 2016 he has been crowned overall JLT/MSA Volunteer of the Year for his work throughout Northern Ireland.

KRIS MEEKE

Kris won the 2015 ANICC Motorsport Award for his performance during the 2015 WRC representing the Abu Dhabi Total Citroen World Rally Team. This year (in 2016) Kris has continued to deliver for Citroen with two outright wins in Portugal and Finland (indeed important to highlight that Kris is the first British winner of Rally Finland in the history of the event – neither Colin McRae nor Richard Burns achieved this accolade). Kris has now signed a full time contract with Citroen and will compete on all rounds of the 2017 WRC in the new Citroen C3 World Rally Car – we wish him well tonight as he competes on Rally Monte Carlo.

JONATHAN RAE

A departure from usual nominees for this award as this year we have a well-known Motorcycle racer nominated through the ANICC. Jonathan, from Larne, has gained exceptional success in recent years emulating and exceeding the results many of our best known International Motorcycle Racers have achieved over the last 30 years and it is a real pleasure to say that Jonathan, a Double World Superbike Champion (in 2015 and 2016) has received support from the car fraternity.

RONNIE TROUTON MBE

Ronnie has been linked to the ANICC since our very first meeting in 1963. He has taken on many volunteer roles with his Clubs, the ANICC and the Motor Sports Association, including Club, Association and Event secretarial positions, various Chairmanship and Honorary President positions for both Clubs and the Association (including with Sport NI as chair of the local Lottery commission), past Chairman of the MSA Autotest Specialist Committee and an MSA Board member, current Honorary Vice-President of the MSA Motor Sports Council, holder of both the Prince Michael Award of Merit and of an ANICC Lifetime Achievement award. His role as a Steward for both MSA and Clubs has meant that his influence has spread throughout the sport across the UK and not just in Northern Ireland. In recent years Ronnie has devoted much of his time to family life with his wife Frede requiring support and his knowledge and experience at the Association has been missed since his retirement from Association Presidency at the end of 2013 when the Association Council presented him with a much sought after signed print of Stirling Moss winning the 1950 Tourist Trophy at Dundrod in his Jaguar XK120. This nomination confirms the very high regard in which Northern Ireland motorsport, the Clubs and the Association hold Ronnie.